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THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

MISSIONS

A Missionary Survey of the Year 1916: The Home Base

Under this caption appears a lengthy but notable editorial in the *International Review of Missions* for April. The preparation of such a survey must require much painstaking labor. Those who are interested in the cause of missions may find here a wonderfully compact but lucid statement of the conditions in the various mission fields and the status of the work, with the new problems and interests superimposed by the present world-situation. The article is such that a full review of it cannot be made here. However, it is of sufficient importance to direct attention to it. The concluding paragraph is as follows:

The year has seen no liberation of the lands on which the hand of war has been laid, no mitigation of the suffering of the peoples, no reconstruction of the work which has been arrested or destroyed. Yet the situation has large elements of hope. The support of missions has been maintained at the home base and self-support has notably increased in the churches on the mission field. The Christian churches in Japan, China, and India have taken the lead in vigorous evangelistic effort during the year. The fact that a spiritual harvest has ripened in the midst of the war is a proof that life will triumph. The year by revealing new aspects of old problems has heightened the greatness of the missionary task. In the midst of the severances caused by the war the spirit of fellowship and of co-operation has been persistent. Instances of international, inter-denominational, and inter-society collaboration have abounded, and co-operative organizations both at the home base and on the mission fields have done wide and fruitful work. Thus the great enterprise of foreign missions which lies at the heart of the church in every nation and which by its extent is peculiarly open to the disintegrating forces of war is manifesting within

itself the living forces of fellowship which will one day work with power when the time for the healing of the nations comes.

Reinforcements

S. M. Zwemer, editor of the *Moslem World*, says in the April number of that journal, "The greatest need of missions among Moslems now—and a need that will be enormously emphasized after the war—is reinforcements." He urges that the new conditions which will prevail then in the Turkish Empire, Persia, Arabia, Egypt, and North Africa should be faced now. Among Moslems in Egypt, as never before, there is an interest in Christianity and its teachings. At no time in all the past history of Islam have so many copies of the Scriptures and religious tracts been bought and read by the Moslems. An unusual spirit of religious inquiry obtains among them, including their sheikhs or religious teachers. When the period of reconstruction comes after the war there will be a new appeal of supreme urgency from these fields which were not adequately manned even before the war. "We will then face needs that are appalling in their extent and deep beyond measure in their pathos." During the war hosts of the choicest of men from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and Great Britain have come into the very closest contact with the New East. Here these men, many of them from the colleges and universities, endured hardship, had the joy of sacrifice, and saw the opportunities for medical, educational, and social service. They have been face to face with Islam and its needs. "To them the New East has spoken of a higher warfare and they have seen the coming of a kingdom without frontiers or race barriers.

It is for the church to extend to them the call for reinforcements and to do it now."

Christian Advance in Africa

In the *Churchman* for June 15 further reference is made to missionary interests in Africa. This writer thinks that there the war has seriously affected the work, having arrested it entirely in many places. But the exactions of the war situation have revealed in many ways how deep-rooted and living are the forces of Christianity. Of the vitality and generosity of the native Christians of Kamerun, for instance, both German and American missionaries have borne testimony. In East and Central Africa "whole villages are asking for teachers, and the native Christians have shown a deepened sense of responsibility." Of the troops recruited in Uganda, Bishop Willis says, a large proportion were Christians. The sick and the wounded of British African and Indian troops have been ministered to by the hospital of Mengo. By the report of the commission appointed under the Native Land act, over 18,000,000 acres are to be set apart for the exclusive use of the natives. The first college for the higher education of natives was opened by General Botha in South Africa, February, 1916. These two events have marked significance. Even under the unusual conditions resulting from the war there has been considerable advance in missionary work and an increased readiness in some of the native churches for self-support and self-government.

A Swiss Mission of Help

In the *Watchman* for June 16 the editor calls attention to an interesting missionary movement. The appeal is made to the German-speaking citizens of the Swiss Republic to bring enlightenment to their brethren within the frontiers of the empire. The call is made by Professor Paul Suppel, of Zurich. He says:

Tell the truth to Germany, for she is dying for the want of it, and you are the only ones to whom she will listen, because she knows you wish her well. Her salvation depends, for much, on you. Tell her how the war began, how the lies were told, and continue to be told, how the promises were broken, and how all that followed—until the entrance of America in the war—is the consequence of this first crime. Tell her how the judgment of the world has fallen upon her. . . . Will the German Swiss refuse this help in the hour of need? Will they not help her to retake her place among the nations free and equal before the law?

The influence of this appeal is already being felt. This is true especially of German-speaking Switzerland and of the more progressive elements in the empire beyond the Rhine. A number of prominent democratic and republican reformers from Germany have selected Zurich as the base of their operations, and also a German Republican party has set up its headquarters there. Already there has been started in Zurich a boldly independent organ for democratic politics, the bi-weekly *Freie Zeitung*.

A Significant Step Forward

The four American Baptist Mission Societies, two home and two foreign, have recently adopted a United Apportionment Plan. This action is regarded as a very important step forward. It is the culmination of many years of consideration and prayer. The result has not been reached rapidly or carelessly. The editor of *Missions* for June comments on the event with great enthusiasm. He seems to be justified in believing that a unified presentation of the claims of the home and the foreign fields, with one apportionment covering all, will be approved by the churches. It is recognized that so great a readjustment cannot be made without some friction and some serious difficulties, but soon it will be working satisfactorily and one will wonder why the plan was not tried long ago. All honor

is due to the leaders of these great missionary societies, who have brought about this wholesome unity of program and spirit.

They have led in a new and better way. "This is the enlightened and voluntary and hence effective unity in service as in aim."

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Social Life of Young People

In *Religious Education* for June appears the report of the Commission on the Church and the Social Relations of Young People, made at the annual convention of the Religious Education Association. It is of such significance as to justify here a brief outline of the first half of it. By reference to the report those who are interested may see the details, including the latter half. The scope of the problem is assumed to include the proper attitude of the church toward the social conditions and needs of all the children and youth for whom it has the responsibility of service and an adequate working program for the church in accord therewith. The breadth of the subject prevents treatment in great detail. Furthermore, since each individual church has its own problem determined by local conditions, the report endeavors to present some general principles which should govern the study and treatment of any local problem and to illustrate them by concrete examples.

1. Social service, the effort to meet social needs and to solve, or help to solve, social problems, is a legitimate and necessary part of the religious educational work of the church.

a) A proper conception of individual salvation as consisting in the development of genuinely religious character emphasizes this responsibility.

b) The complexity of modern life, with its multiplicity of human contacts, still further emphasizes this responsibility.

c) A correct understanding of the nature and meaning of social service makes clear its religious value.

(1) True social service must be undertaken and carried out with knowledge and sympathetic appreciation of the viewpoint, desires, interests, and needs of those served.

(2) From the standpoint of the church social service must be recognized as a genuine and adequate expression of the best religious impulse.

2. The church should adopt a scientific method for the study and treatment of social conditions and needs.

3. In all its social service the church should co-operate with other agencies and avoid unnecessary duplication of effort. This applies to two classes of agencies: (1) the various social institutions and organizations both public and private, and (2) other churches.

4. In the social work of the church efficiency should be the aim, quality rather than quantity the test of success. This involves: (1) competent supervision for all social and recreational activities, (2) the enlistment of young people in service, and (3) adequate and respectable equipment and facilities.

The Call to Religious Leadership

A sudden depletion in religious leadership, the *Congregationalist* thinks, is one of the very serious problems of today. This conclusion is based upon the fact that many of the best-trained ministers have surrendered their churches to become chaplains; others, to take up Y.M.C.A. and war-relief work. Large numbers of young men who aspire to service in religious leadership, some of them already students in colleges or seminaries and others who had planned to be, have entered upon war service of some kind. That religious leaders are needed in the war is not questioned, but it is true also that they will be needed very much after the war. If there are to be trained religious leaders then, they must be prepared now. On this basis it is urged that as far as possible the young men continue their college and seminary work.

An effort to meet this problem is being made by the religious education boards of